

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Dar al-Mustafa in Ramadan

What follows is a brief outline of Sayyidi Habib `Umar's schedule for his students in Dar al-Mustafa during the month of Ramadan. If we can stick to even part of this schedule we will gain a great deal from this blessed month. The people of Allah mention four times during the day and night that the seeker must keep alive with worship and remembrance: the last part of the night before Fajr, the time between Fajr and sunrise, the time before Maghrib and the time between Maghrib and Isha. It is noticeable that none of these times are neglected, in spite of the fact that in Ramadan they are easy to neglect.

After praying Fajr there is the normal *musafahah* (where everyone shakes hands with one another) and then the *adhkar* from the *Khulasah* are read up to *al-Wird al-Latif*.

Habib Umar then gives a general lesson until *Ishraq*, so that no-one misses out on the reward and benefits of keeping this time alive and then praying the *Duha* prayer. Then there is rest time until *Zuhr*.

After Zuhr prayer there is Qur'an recitation in groups and sometimes a lesson in one of the Qur'anic sciences.

After Asr prayer there is the *musafahah* along with the *adhkar* and then a *Rawhah*, in which Habib Umar often covers, along with other books, some of the hadith and rulings pertaining to Ramadan.

The Wird al-Latif is read around twenty minutes before Maghrib. It ends with *istighfar* and repetition of the Ramadan du'a:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ نَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ نَسْأَلُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَنَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ النَّارِ (3)
اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوٌّ تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنَّا (3) يَا كَرِيم

‘I testify that there is nothing worthy of worship other than Allah and we seek the forgiveness of Allah. We ask You for Paradise and take refuge in You from the Fire.’ (3 times)

O Allah, truly You are all-Pardoning, You love to pardon so pardon us” (3 times). On the third time say “O Most Generous” (*Ta Karim*).’

In fact this du`a is repeated throughout the day and night at the end of the regular *adhkar*.

At the ***adhan of Maghrib*** everyone breaks their fast on dates and water. Coffee and snacks are also served. This prayer is read upon breaking the fast, compiled from different narrations by Habib Muhammad al-Haddar:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ، اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَسَلِّمْ ، اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ
صُؤْمْتُ ، وَعَلَى رِزْقِكَ أَفْطَرْتُ ، وَ بِكَ آمَنْتُ ، وَعَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْتُ ،
وَرَحْمَتِكَ رَجَوْتُ ، وَإِلَيْكَ أُنَبِّئُ ، ذَهَبَ الظَّمَأُ وَ ابْتَلَّتِ الْعُرُوقُ وَ
ثَبَتَ الْأَجْرُ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى ،

يَا وَاسِعَ الْفَضْلِ اغْفِرْ لِي ، الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَعَانِي فَصُؤْمْتُ وَ رَزَقَنِي
فَأَفْطَرْتُ ،

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ بِرَحْمَتِكَ الَّتِي وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ أَنْ تَغْفِرَ لِي ،

سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ ، رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ،

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوٌّ كَرِيمٌ تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنَّا يَا كَرِيمُ ،

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلِّمْ ، اللَّهُمَّ يَا عَظِيمُ يَا
عَظِيمُ أَنْتَ إِلَهِي لَا إِلَهَ غَيْرُكَ اغْفِرْ الذَّنْبَ الْعَظِيمَ فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَغْفِرُ الذَّنْبَ
الْعَظِيمَ إِلَّا الْعَظِيمُ ،

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا وَارْزُقْنَا عَنَّا وَتَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا ، وَأَدْخِلْنَا الْجَنَّةَ وَنَجِّنَا مِنَ
النَّارِ ، وَأَصْلِحْ لَنَا شَأْنَنَا كُلَّهُ وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ
وَسَلَّمَ ، فِي كُلِّ حِينٍ أَبَدًا عَدَدَ نِعَمِ اللَّهِ وَإِفْضَالِهِ.

‘All praise is due to Allah Lord of the Worlds. **O Allah**, bestow peace and blessings upon our Master Muhammad and upon his Family.

O Allah, for You I have fasted and upon Your provision I have broken my fast. In You I believe, in You I place my trust and I hope for Your mercy and to You I turn. The thirst has gone and the veins have become saturated and the reward has been obtained, Allah willing. O Possessor of vast bounty, forgive me. Praise be to Allah Who has assisted me so that I fasted and provided for me so that I broke my fast. O Allah, I ask You by Your mercy that encompasses everything to forgive me. Transcendent are You, O Allah, and praise be to You. O Lord, accept from us (our actions), truly You are the All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

O Allah, truly You are all-Pardoning, Most Generous. You love to pardon so pardon us, O Most Generous.

O Allah, bestow peace and blessings upon our Master Muhammad and upon his Family and Companions.

O Allah, O Most Great, O Most Great, You are my Lord, there is no god but You, forgive every great sin, for only the Most Great forgives great sins.

O Allah, forgive us, show mercy to us, be pleased with us, accept from us (our actions), enter us into Paradise and save us from the Fire and rectify all our affairs.

O Allah, bestow peace and blessings upon our Master Muhammad and upon his Family and Companions at all times for eternity to the number of Allah’s blessings and bounties.’

Since prayers are answered upon breaking the fast, Habib Muhamad then recommends reading the ‘Prayer of Treasures’¹:

¹ Shaddad bin Aws heard the Prophet (peace be upon him saying) saying: “If you see people amassing gold and silver then amass (the reward) of these words.” Narrated by al- Tirmidhi and al-Nasa’i

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الثَّبَاتَ فِي الْأَمْرِ وَأَسْأَلُكَ عَزِيمَةَ الرُّشْدِ وَأَسْأَلُكَ شُكْرَ نِعْمَتِكَ
وَحُسْنَ عِبَادَتِكَ وَأَسْأَلُكَ لِسَانًا صَادِقًا وَقَلْبًا سَلِيمًا وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا تَعْلَمُ
وَأَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ خَيْرِ مَا تَعْلَمُ وَأَسْتَغْفِرُكَ مِمَّا تَعْلَمُ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ
عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلَّمَ ، فِي كُلِّ حِينٍ أَبَدًا عَدَدَ نِعَمِ اللَّهِ وَإِفْضَالِهِ .

‘O Allah, I ask You for firmness in the religion, guidance accompanied with firm resolve, gratitude for Your blessings and perfection of my worship of You. I ask You for a truthful tongue and a sound heart. I take refuge in You from the evil which Your knowledge encompasses, I ask You for the good which Your knowledge encompasses and I seek forgiveness for that which Your knowledge encompasses, truly You have absolute knowledge of the unseen. O Allah, bestow peace and blessings upon our Master Muhammad and upon his Family and Companions at all times for eternity to the number of Allah’s blessings and bounties.

After praying Maghrib, the imam reminds those present to make the intention for fasting the following day (according to the Shafi’i school the intention must be made before Fajr for each day for the fast to be valid). Out of precaution, the scholars also advise taking the Maliki position which is to intend fasting the whole month.

The most complete intention is:

نَوَيْتُ صَوْمَ غَدٍ عَنْ أَدَاءِ فَرَضِ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ لِهَذِهِ السَّنَةِ لِلَّهِ تَعَالَى

‘I intend to fast tomorrow, performing the obligation of Ramadan in the present year for Allah Most High.’

After praying the two sunnah rakats of Maghrib, *Salat al-Tasbih* is then prayed in congregation. Praying it in congregation is permissible in the Shafi’i school and the existence of the congregation encourages more people to pray it. *Salat al-Tasbih* has many merits. The Messenger of Allah taught it to his uncle, our Master, al-`Abbas and said to him: “If you perform this, Allah will forgive your sins: the first and the last of them, the old and the new, those that you committed by mistake and those that you

committed deliberately, the small and the large, those that you committed in private and those that you committed in public.” He then said: “If you are able to pray it every day then do so; if you are not able to, then pray it once a week; if you are not able to, then pray it once a month; if you are not able to, then pray it once a year; if you are not able to, then pray it once in your life.”²

The one who prays six rakats after Maghrib has the reward of twelve years’ worship, as the Messenger of Allah informed us. So the one who prays two sunnah rakats and then the four rakats of Salat al-Tasbih will gain this reward, multiplied by seventy, since the reward for every supererogatory act is multiplied seventy times in Ramadan.

Salat al-Tasbih is four rakats. In the night it is recommended to pray two rakats followed by two more rakats, and in the day it is recommended to pray four consecutive rakats. It is best if it is prayed by making the tasbih (*subhanallah w'alhamdulillah, wa la ilaha ill'Allah w'Allahu akbar*) fifteen times after the Fatihah and Surah have been read, and then ten times in each position after that (*ruku', 'itidal, sujud, julus*). At the end of the first rakat, after the second prostration, one sits briefly to read the tasbih ten times before standing up. Likewise in the second rakat one reads the tasbih ten times before reading the *tashahhud*. A second way of doing it is to read the tasbih fifteen times before the Fatihah and ten times after the Surah, in which case one does not read the tasbih after the second prostration in each rakat. The number of tasbih should add up to seventy-five in each rakat so that the total is three hundred in four rakats.

Upon completing *Salat al-Tasbih*, the following prayer is read:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ، اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ
أَجْمَعِينَ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ تَوْفِيقَ أَهْلِ الْهُدَى ، وَأَعْمَالَ أَهْلِ الْيَقِينِ ، وَمُنَاصَحَةَ أَهْلِ
التَّوْبَةِ ، وَعَزَمَ أَهْلِ الصَّبْرِ ، وَجَدَّ أَهْلِ الْحَشْيَةِ ، وَطَلَبَ أَهْلِ الرَّغْبَةِ ، وَتَعَبَّدَ أَهْلَ الْوَرَعِ ،
وَعَرَفَانَ أَهْلَ الْعِلْمِ حَتَّى أَخَافَكَ ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ مَخَافَةً تَحْجِزُنِي عَنْ مَعَاصِيكَ ، حَتَّى
أَعْمَلَ بِطَاعَتِكَ عَمَلًا أَسْتَحِقُّ بِهِ رِضَاكَ ، وَحَتَّى أُنَاصِحَكَ بِالتَّوْبَةِ خَوْفًا مِنْكَ ، وَ حَتَّى

² Narrated by Abu Daud, Ibn Majah, Ibn Khuzaymah and al-Tabarani

أُخْلِصَ لَكَ النَّصِيحَةُ حَيَاءً مِنْكَ ، وَحَتَّى أَتَوَكَّلَ عَلَيْكَ فِي الْأُمُورِ حُسْنِ ظَنِّ بِكَ ،
سُبْحَانَ خَالِقِ النُّورِ ، وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلَّامٌ ،

((سُبْحَانَ رَبِّكَ رَبِّ الْعِزَّةِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ * وَسَلَامٌ عَلَى الْمُرْسَلِينَ * وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ
الْعَالَمِينَ)) ، عَدَدَ خَلْقِهِ وَرِضَا نَفْسِهِ وَزِنَةَ عَرْشِهِ ، وَمِدَادَ كَلِمَاتِهِ .

All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the Worlds. **O Allah**, bestow peace and blessings upon our Master Muhammad and upon all his Family and Companions.

O Allah, I ask for the enabling grace that You bestow to those You have guided, and the actions of the people of certainty, the sincerity of the people of repentance, the resolve of the people of patience, the earnestness of those who fear You, the seeking of those that long for You, the worship of the people of scrupulousness and the divine knowledge of the people of knowledge in order that I may truly fear You.

O Allah, I ask You for fear that prevents me from disobeying You, so that I act in obedience to You and thus deserve Your pleasure; so that I repent sincerely out of fear of You; so that I am sincere in all my transactions out of shyness of You and so that I trust in You in all my affairs, having a good opinion of You. Transcendent is the Creator of Light. **O Allah**, bestow peace and blessings upon our Master Muhammad and upon his Family and Companions. Transcendent is Your Lord, Lord of Might beyond (the false claims) that they ascribe to Him, and peace be upon the Messengers and all praise is due to Allah, Lord of the Worlds, to the number of His creation, to His satisfaction, the weight of His throne and the amount of ink of His words.

There is then time for the students to eat and prepare for the night. It is sunnah to have a bath every night in Ramadan to refresh oneself and prepare oneself for prayer in congregation.

After the adhan of 'Isha' the Ratib al-'Attas and Ratib al-Haddad are read and the Ramadan du'a is repeated until the 'Isha' prayer.

After the sunnah rakats after 'Isha', *Salat al-Tarawih* begins. Habib 'Umar recites the Qur'an in his unique way, interacting with Allah's Book and directly experiencing the greatness of the One Whose words he is reciting. He reads around two Juz' every night in order to complete the Qur'an on the 17th night of Ramadan. The 17th night is the night of Badr and there is a large celebration to commemorate Badr and the completion of the Qur'an.

After the first four rakats, prayers are bestowed upon the Prophet and after each four rakats prayers are made for each of the four *Khulafa'* (after eight rakats – Sayyiduna Abu Bakr, after twelve – Sayyiduna 'Umar, after sixteen – Sayyiduna 'Uthman and after

twenty – Sayyiduna `Ali). Apart from connecting those praying with these blessed individuals, this makes it clear how many rakats have been prayed.

After *Salat al-Tarawih*, three rakats of *Witr* are prayed – two rakats followed by one. In the first, the imam reads Surat al-`Ala after the Fatihah, in the second Surat al-Kafirun. In the final rakat the imam reads Surat al-Ikhlās, Surat al-Falaq and Surat al-Nas. In the second half of Ramadan the du`a of *Qunut* is read in the last rakat.

Upon finishing *Witr*, the following is read, and then du`a is made:

سُبْحَانَهُ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ (three times) سُبُّوحٌ قُدُّوسٌ رَبُّ الْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالرُّوحِ

The imam once again reminds everyone to make the intention for fasting the following day.

Poetry is then recited in praise of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) and the focus changes from being on Allah and His Book to being on His Beloved. Through praising him and bestowing prayers upon him it is hoped that our worship is accepted, and he is at his most generous in Ramadan, as the hadith tells us. Other poems that welcome Ramadan, talk about its merits and bid farewell to it are also read throughout the month. A selection of du`as are also read. Many of these can be found in Habib Muhammad al-Haddar's book *Nafahat Ramadaniyyah*. Coffee is served to rejuvenate those present.

After this there is Qur'an recitation in groups. There is a *khatam* of Qur'an before Fajr every six nights. The du`a of Sayyiduna `Ali Zayn al-`Abidin is read.

Habib `Umar often goes on to pray *Tarawih* in Masjid Ba `Alawi in Tarim. *Tarawih* in the mosques of Tarim starts at different times throughout the night so it is possible to pray in more than one place.

After *suhur*, the remaining eight rakats of *Witr* are prayed in congregation in Dar al-Mustafa. Around a juz' is read, so that the Qur'an is completed by the end of the month. This is followed by the *adhkar* before Fajr, which end with *istighfar*. One thus ends the night, like the day, seeking forgiveness and cleaning one's heart.